



Vermont Department of Health

2009 H1N1: Information for Town Health Officers



Guidance • Support • Prevention • Protection

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Influenza: a Viral Infection

- Spread
 - Aerosolized droplets from coughing or sneezing up to a 6 foot radius
 - Hand to face contact (nose, ears, mouth) after touching infected areas
- Incubation period (time from exposure until symptoms)
 - 1 to 7 days (average for 2009 H1N1: 3-4 days)

Influenza

- Symptom duration
 - 3 to 7 days average
 - Average fever in non-hospitalized: 2 - 4 days
- Contagious
 - Range: 1 day before symptoms to 7 to 10 days after symptoms
 - Highest transmission: during fever
 - Little transmission post-fever

Influenza-like Illness (ILI)

- **Influenza-like Illness:**
 - Fever plus sore throat or
 - Fever plus cough

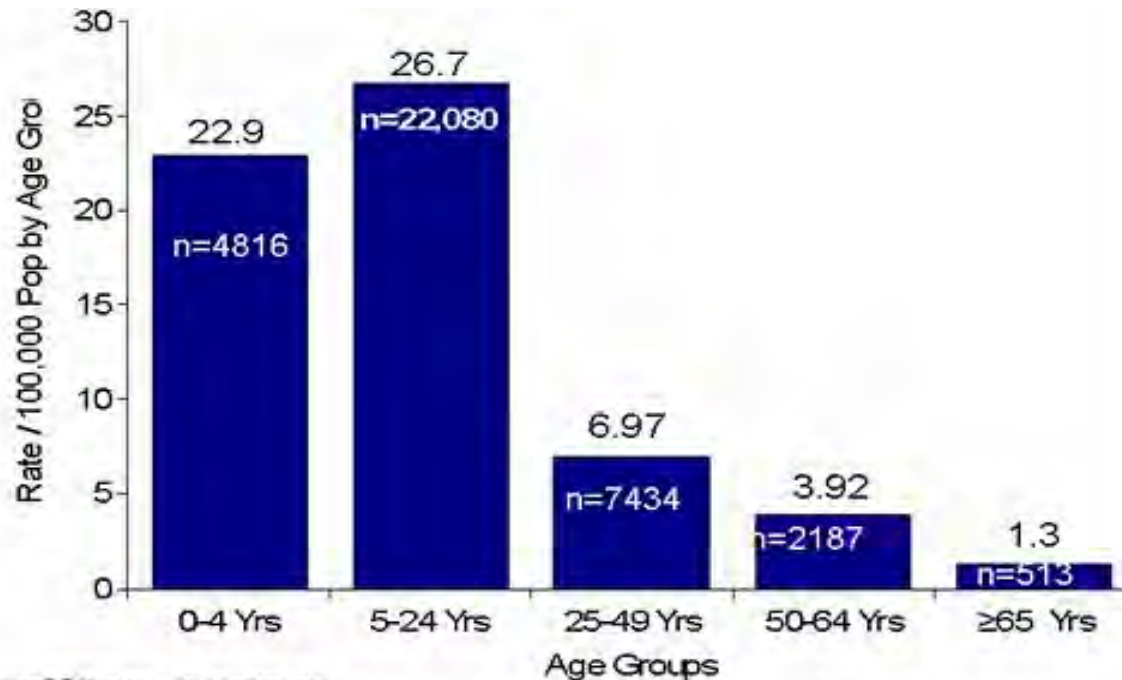
- **Other symptoms may include**
 - Headache
 - Muscle & joint aches
 - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
 - Fatigue

2009 H1N1 influenza A

- Novel (new) flu virus in humans
- Caused pandemic (e.g. worldwide spread)
- High attack rate particularly among young
- Generally mild disease in healthy people
- Most hospitalizations & deaths in high risk groups
- Highly unusual summer flu activity



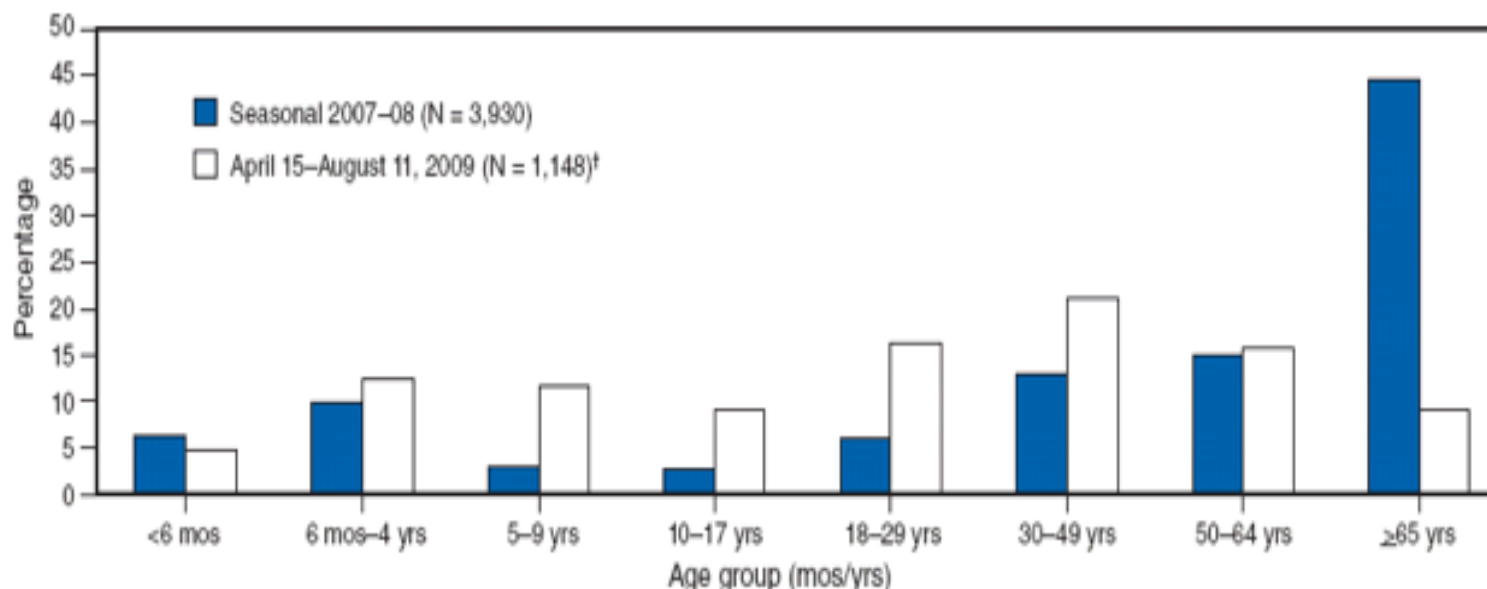
2009 H1N1 Age Distribution: August 13, 2009



*Excludes 6,741 cases with missing ages.

Rate / 100,000 by Single Year Age Groups: Denominator source: 2008 Census Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau at: <http://www.census.gov/popest/totals/asm/files/tot-EST2007-ALLDATA-R-File24.csv>

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Distribution by age group of persons hospitalized with laboratory-confirmed influenza,*
--- United States, 2007--08 winter influenza season
and April 15--August 11, 2009

Source: Emerging Infections Program, CDC.



Risk Factors for Severe Influenza Disease

- Chronic lung diseases, such as Asthma
- Chronic heart, renal, or liver disease
- Diabetes
- Pregnancy
- Immunocompromised individuals (cancer or immunosuppression)

Testing and treatment

- Most people will NOT be tested
 - Limited testing for seriously ill (hospitalized patients)
 - Limited testing for surveillance purposed
- **Antivirals:** emphasis on early treatment for those with ILI who are at high risk for influenza complications

2009 H1N1: Summary

- Not a more serious strain, but likely to infect more people since few people are immune.

- Timing:
 - **Flu is usually a winter disease**
 - **We may see flu outbreaks as early as September**
 - **Vaccine for new flu available: earliest mid- to late October**

Community Mitigation: Personal and Community Measures to Slow spread of Flu

- **Hand hygiene: Wash your hands!**
- **Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough!**
- **Institutions:**
 - **Make soap, paper towels, and alcohol-based hand cleaners readily available**
 - **Easy access to tissues**

Community and Personal Measures

- **Sick people need to stay home.**
- **We Really Mean It.**
 - until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever/signs of a fever
 - while not using fever-reducing medications

Guidance: Current Flu Conditions

- **People at higher risk of complications from flu should check with their health care provider if they develop fever with cough or sore throat**
 - **Benefit of early treatment with antivirals**

Guidance: Current Flu Conditions

- **Routine cleaning: Schools and workplaces**
 - **Establish regular schedules for frequent cleaning of surfaces and items with frequent hand contact**

Guidance: Current Flu Conditions

- Schools: plan on staying open
 - **Very disruptive to close schools**
 - **Use all above measures to slow disease transmission**
 - **Schools may need to close briefly for practical reasons**
- If flu strain becomes more severe, different recommendations will be used

Influenza Vaccination 2009

- Importance of Seasonal flu vaccination!
 - **Don't ignore risks of seasonal flu**
 - **Available September-October**
 - **Usual recommendations for who should get it**
- H1N1 flu vaccination
 - **Human trials currently underway**
 - **Initial supply expected in mid to late October**
 - **Likely two shots, 3 - 4 weeks apart**
 - **Given to target groups first**

2009 H1N1 Vaccination

- Target groups identified by CDC
 - **Pregnant women**
 - **Caregivers & household contacts for children under 6 months of age**
 - **Children 6 months to 24 yrs of age**
 - **Healthcare workers & first responders**
 - **Adults 24 to 65 with chronic medical conditions at risk for influenza complications**

H1N1 vaccination delivery

- Health Department is responsible for planning and coordinating vaccine delivery
 - **CDC will be providing vaccine and supplies at no cost**
- Vaccination will be voluntary
- Plans are still be developed, but may include:
 - **Private doctor's offices**
 - **Home Health/VNA public clinics**
 - **School clinics**
 - **Health Department public clinics**

Influenza Response: Role of the THO

- **Source of accurate information / role in educating other town officials**
 - **Information and communication liaison between Health Department and their town**
 - **Participate in Listserv**
 - **Read guidance from VDH website**

Influenza Response: Role of the THO

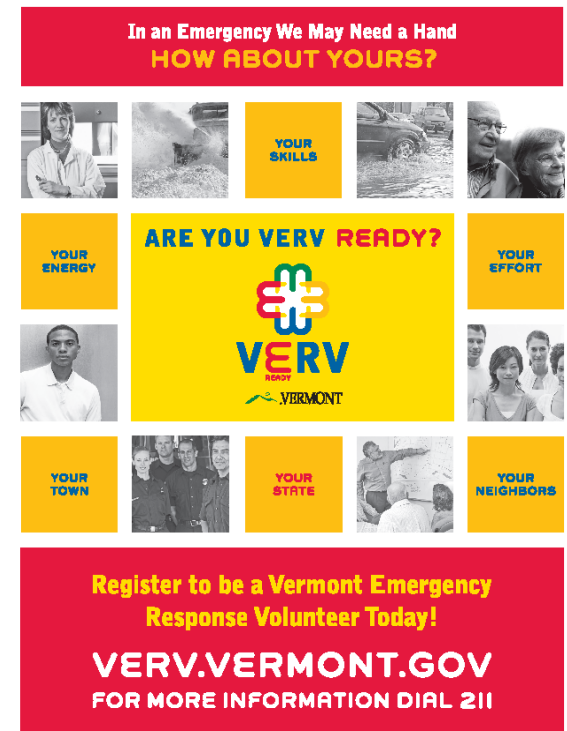
- **THOs are encouraged to:**
 - **Participate as possible in your town's emergency response planning**
 - **Consider becoming involved with planning for flu clinics in schools or other community settings**

Influenza Response: Role of the THO

- **Possible roles for THO:**
 - **Stay in touch with schools/other public programs regarding support they may need**
 - **Work with town or volunteer agencies to support households in need**
 - **Potential spokesperson for town with the media**

Vermont Emergency Response Volunteers System (VERV)

- **VERV: on-line registration system for volunteers**
- **VERV.vermont.gov**
- **Variety of volunteers needed**
- **Encourage and support enrollment- consider enrolling yourself!**



Isolation or Quarantine

- **Isolation: staying away from others while ill**
 - **Standard recommendation for flu**
 - **Voluntary**
- **Quarantine: exposed people who are not ill staying away from others**
 - **Will not be recommended under current conditions**
- **No plans for mandatory isolation or quarantine**

Importance of Good Information!

- Accurate, timely information is essential
- Health Department Website:
 - <http://healthvermont.gov/>
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC):
 - <http://www.flu.gov/>
 - <http://www.ready.gov/>

Things could change quickly!

Good communication will be essential.

Let's keep talking